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H. D.

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/551,048

09/27/2005

Walter Apfelbacher

32860-000933/US

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30596 7590 10/16/2007
HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O.BOX 8910
RESTON, VA 20195

EXAMINER

HYEON, HAE M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2839

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

10/16/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/551,048

Applicant(s)

APFELBACHER ET AL.

Examiner

Hae M. Hyeon

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because **portions of the drawings in Figures 5-8 are not printed**. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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3. Claims 1-2 and 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schultz et al (US 6,617,511 B2).

Schultz discloses a device 102 comprising an essentially cuboid housing 104 an attachment face (rear face, not labeled), a connecting face having four side surfaces, 120, 122, 124, 126 arranged at right angles to the attachment face and a front face 136 opposite the attachment face; and at least one electrical connection element 138 (inside of an opening 140, see Fig. 2) and at least one mechanical connection 132, provided on a number of the connecting faces for connection of a functional module 106 connectable to the housing 104. The functional module 106 is snap connected to two connecting faces 120, 122 without the use of any tools. Schultz teaches the functional module 106 having a switch function 150 can be replace with switches or a duplex outlet (see Fig. 3 and column 5, lines 57-64). A base 153 of the functional module 106 is aligned (longitudinally or parallel) with the attachment face. Also, the functional module 106 has two attachment limbs 170 arranged on both sides of an opening 140 in the housing 104 and each aligned parallel to one side surface 120 and 122. Although Schultz does not recite different functions of the functional module specific functions as recited in claims 1, 4-7 and 13-14, Schultz teaches that the functional module 106 can have different functions such as a switch or an outlet. Furthermore, **the use of the functional module with different function does not change or affect the structure and the function of the claimed invention because the functional module is only an element that is intended to be used with the claimed invention.**

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the device taught by Schultz such that it would be connected

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with a functional module having different functions because the device would have different functions depending on the functions of the functional modules.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed on September 24, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant argues that claim 1 is amended to positively recite the functional module and the functional module of Schultz having the switch and outlet functions are not configured for load circuit monitoring. The examiner agrees with the applicant, but as stated in the above rejections, different functions for the functional module recited in the claims are only intended use. It has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ 2d 1647 (1987). A person having ordinary skill in the art would know that the function of a functional module is not limited only to the switch and outlet functions taught by Schultz, but many different functions exist. Therefore, the functional module 106 of Schultz can be modified to have different functions such as the function for load circuit monitoring as recited in claim 1. The independent claim 1 is amended to recite the functional module of cancelled claim 3. Since claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in the last office action, the amended claim 1 is now rejected with the same rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the last office action. Therefore, the present rejection is made final.

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hae M. Hyeon whose telephone number is 571-272-2093. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. (8:30-5:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tulsidas C. Patel can be reached on (571) 272-2098. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

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For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Hae M Hyeon
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2839

hnh

hnh

Hae Moon Hyeon